



Borough of Welshpool.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the
YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1938

To the Sanitary Authority of the Borough of Welshpool.

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

I have much pleasure in submitting my Annual Report and Vital Statistics on the Public Health of Welshpool for the year ending 31st December, 1938, drawn up on the lines indicated in Circular 1728 for Wales.

SECTION A:—

Area (in acres) , 20,426.

Registrar General's estimation of the resident population is 5,263.

Number of inhabited houses, 1744.

Rateable value and sum represented by a penny rate:
£25,889, £100.

Social Conditions:

The district is purely agricultural, Welshpool itself is an important distributing centre and large fairs are held in its Smith-field weekly.

On enquiry at the Labour Exchange, I am informed that unemployment was considerably less in 1938 than 1937, in fact there were on an average only about 100 unemployed and these chiefly elderly men, as compared with double that number in 1937.

VITAL STATISTICS:—

	M.	F.
Live Births—Legitimate	45	27
Illegitimate	4	4
	—	—
Total ...	49	31— 80

Birth Rate per 1000 of the estimated population:— 15.01 against 17.6 for 1937.

Deaths:—M. 37. F. 32:—69.

Death Rate per 1000:—13.1.

The birth rate for the smaller towns for 1938 was 15.4. and the death rate 11.7.

I am glad to say that there were no deaths from puerperal causes.

Death Rate of infants under one year of age:—

Only three infants died under one year all being legitimate.

Death Rate of infants under one year of age:—37.5 per 1000 live births.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages):—6.

„ Measles:—Nil.

„ Whooping Cough:—Nil.

„ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age):—Nil.

No causes of sickness have been specially noteworthy in the area in 1938.

SECTION B:—

The Public Health Officers of the Authority remain unchanged, in February of this year I tendered my resignation as part time Medical Officer but at the request of the Council I agreed to act until arrangements could be made for the appointment of a whole time Medical Officer of Health in conjunction with other Health Authorities.

There also has been no change in the services provided in the area under the following heads:—

- (a) Laboratory.
- (b) Ambulance.
- (c) Home Nursing.
- (d) Treatment Centres and Clinics.
- (e) Hospitals.

SECTION C.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER.—Special consideration has been given to the town's water supply; and the Council called in Mr. R. F. Baker of Birkenhead to advise them concerning the quality of the water when filtered and treated. As a result an application has been made to the Ministry of Health for sanction to purchase a chloroclock and ammoniator.

Mr. Baker also dealt with the possibilities of supplying the lands above the present top water level and his reports will be dealt with when the draft Housing lay-out scheme for the Burgess Lands now in course of preparation is completed.

The Ministry have asked for the Council's scheme for dealing with pollution on the gathering ground and after an inspection of the shed, the Council decided to deal with seven pollution points. Details of the scheme have been forwarded to the Ministry for their sanction.

Twenty analyses of the Town's Water have been taken, with a view to ascertaining the quality of the water at the two main springs in the water shed; the raw water at various points of the stream feeding the reservoir and of the water after treatment. Copy of latter is attached for information. As a result of these investigations Mr. Baker considers that:— "After storage in the reservoirs, settlement in the Settling Tanks, filtration and sterilisation, provided proper attention is given to the dosage, the water should be perfectly pure and wholesome at all times."

Certificate of Analysis.

(Bacteriological.)

Sample of Water received on 13/4/38.

Marked Clear Water Storage Tank at Welshpool Waterworks.

Number of organisms grown on Agar in 3 days

at 20°C 1 per c.c.

Number of organisms grown on Agar in 48 hours

at 37° C. 33 per 1 c.c.

B. Coli (Lactose+Indol+) present in ———

do. do. do. absent in 100 c.c.

This sample is satisfactory.

(Signed) HAROLD LOWE, M.Sc., F.I.C.

There was no shortage during the year and at the end of the dry period the total storage had been reduced by only one and a half million gallons.

Extensions of the mains were carried out at Westwood, Erw Wen and the Council's Housing Estate at Bronybuckley. The latter has enabled an extra link to be laid down in the distributing system which gives an alternative method of supply when repair works are in hand.

(ii) DRAINAGE & SEWERAGE.—The clearing of the bed of the Severn and the felling of obstructive trees on the river bank has improved the drainage of the Severn Valley and only in exceptionally heavy rainstorms is there any flooding in the area.

The main sewers have been extended to the Council's new Estate at Bronybuckley and smaller extensions have been carried out at Erw Wen and Westwood.

2. RIVERS & STREAMS.—A Survey of the River Severn in Montgomeryshire was carried out by the County Medical Officer of Health and his report has been submitted to the County Council.

3. CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.—Three closets on the conservancy system have been removed and at the end of the year there were six in existence.

(iii) SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.—Tabular statement with details of all notices served is attached.

(iv) SHOPS & OFFICES.—All the provisions of the Shops Acts appear to have been complied with and it was not found necessary to take any proceedings.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTOR'S VISITS AND NOTICES SERVED DURING THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1938.

Nature of Visit or Inspection.	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	TOTALS.
GENERAL SANITATION.—													
Water Supply	57	65	84	131	98	155	91	73	87	68	46	121	1076
Drainage	8	10	3	17	4	8	5	2	5	6	2	1	71
Workshops	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Public Conveniences	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Refuse Collection	—	1	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	3
Rats and Mice	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	2	31	35
Schools	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
Shops	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits ...	2	—	4	2	1	—	2	1	3	1	—	—	16
HOUSING.—													
<i>Under Public Health Acts.</i>													
No. of Houses Inspected	1	—	1	—	3	6	4	—	—	2	—	—	17
Visits paid to above houses	1	—	1	—	1	4	4	—	—	1	—	—	12
<i>Under Housing Acts.</i>													
No. of Houses Inspected	—	—	—	—	1	—	16	14	—	—	3	4	38
Visits paid to above houses	—	—	—	—	1	—	16	14	—	—	1	4	36
<i>Overcrowding.</i>													
No. of Houses Inspected	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	53	3	58
Visits paid to above houses	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	53	3	58

Verminous Premises:

No. of Houses Inspected	—	I	—	—	—	—
Visits paid to above houses	—	I	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous Housing Visits	—	—	—	—	15	87

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—

[illegible]

MEAT & FOOD INSPECTION.—

Inspection of Meat

Inspection of Meat.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Visits to Slaughterhouses	—	—	—	—	—	—
Visits to Shops and Stalls	I	—	—	—	—	—
Total Meat Inspection Visits ...	—	—	—	—	—	—

Visits to:

Fishmongers and Poulterers ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—
Cowsheds	—	1	—	1	4	—	2	1
Dairies and Milkshops	—	—	—	—	3	—	1	—
Ice-Cream Premises	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—

Totals 70

NOTICES SERVED.—

No. of Informal Notices served	11	25	16	32	18	16	15	10	14	8	7	19	189
No. of Informal Notices complied with	17	16	11	30	23	17	15	9	5	1	6	6	156
No. of Statutory Notices served	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
No. of Statutory Notices complied with	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1

(v) CAMPING SITES.—

- (i) Number of sites used for camping purposes
during 1938 Nil.
- (ii) Number of camping sites in respect of which
licences have been issued under Section 269
of the Public Health Act, 1936 Nil.
- (iii) Number of campers resident in the area at one
time during the summer of 1938 Nil.

(vi) SMOKE ABATEMENT.—No action has been taken with a view to the abatement of nuisance from smoke.

(vii) SWIMMING BATHS & POOLS.—A Swimming Bath Committee with Councillor G. F. Davies as Chairman have prepared a Scheme for the provision of an open air swimming pool which is being proceeded with on the understanding that it will not be a rate charge. Tenders have been invited and as a result the scheme is expected to cost £3,400; a substantial contribution has been offered by the National Fitness Council and the balance is being raised by subscription—already a substantial proportion of this balance has been raised and there is every reason to believe that the bath will be ready for the public next year and Councillor G. F. Davies and his Committee are to be congratulated on the work they have accomplished.

(viii) ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.—This question was given special attention owing to the Council's Slum Clearance Scheme. The whole of the belongings of the tenants of condemned houses, with the exception of their day clothing, were treated in a van with HCN.

- (1) (a) No. of Council Houses found to be infested... Nil.
- (b) No. of other houses found to be infested about 50
- (c) No. of other houses disinfested 100

(2) Furniture and clothing were packed in special vans and given four hours contact with HCN gas. To test the efficiency of the method live bugs were placed in a small bottle plugged with cotton wool and this was packed in the folds of a blanket and then placed in a chest of drawers. When the van was unsealed, all the bugs were found to be dead.

(3) A close watch was kept by the Sanitary Officials to see that every van load was kept sealed for the specified time. Not a single live bug was found after removal to the new houses and no complaint was received from any of the tenants. In addition an inspection of all old houses was made to ensure that no article had been retained by the tenants.

(4) The work of disinfection was carried out by the London Fumigation Company.

(5) All the tenants from the condemned houses were invited to a meeting. The meeting was addressed by the Mayor, Aldermen G. R. D. Harrison and Dr. R. D. Thomas, the Medical Officer and representatives of the London Fumigation Company. The method of disinfection to be adopted was fully described and information as to the life and habits of bugs was given, and was followed by a general discussion. Representatives of practically all the families from the condemned houses attended and the meeting concluded with votes of thanks to the speakers.

4. SCHOOLS.—Schools in the Borough were inspected periodically and were found to be in a fairly satisfactory condition. During the year a new senior school was erected, this school is situated in an open space on the outskirts of the town and has accommodation for approximately 250 pupils and was opened in April, 1939.

SECTION D.—HOUSING.

As soon as the Council's Housing Scheme was completed the Housing Committee asked for a report on overcrowding in the

Borough, with information as to the cost of a new housing scheme for abating same. The report has now been prepared and will receive the consideration of the Council during the next few months.

In addition, the Council's Officers have been instructed to report on the sanitary conditions of all houses of the working classes situate in the Borough and to classify them under the following heads:—

- A. Houses which cannot be improved at reasonable expense.
- B. Houses where expenditure up to £50 will put them in a fairly habitable condition.
- C. Houses which can be put in a good state of repair at reasonable expense.

The survey is now in hand.

1. *Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year:—*

- (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) 55
- (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose... 48
- (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected & recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932 Nil.
- (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose... Nil.
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation Nil.
- (4) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceeding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation Nil.

2. *Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of formal Notices:—*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers 30

3. *Action under Statutory Powers during the Year:—*

(a).—Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs... Nil.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—

(a) By Owners Nil.

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners Nil.

(b).—Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 9

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—

(a) By owners 6

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners Nil.

(c).—Proceedings under sections 11 & 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made Nil.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... Nil.

(d).—Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... Nil.

(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit ... Nil.

4. *Housing Act, 1936.—Part IV.—Overcrowding:—*

(a).—(i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at end of the year ... 51

(ii) Number of families dwelling therein ... 51

(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein ... 275

(b).—Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year ... 3

(c).—(i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year ... 14

(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases ... 65

(d).—Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding ... Nil.

(e).—Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding conditions upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report ... Nil.

SECTION E.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a). MILK SUPPLIES.—9 inspections have been carried out in connection with the issue of licences under the Milk and Dairies Order 1926 and the Milk (Special Designations) Orders 1936 and 1938, and as a result four licences have been issued for sale of accredited milk.

Three applications were received for registration under the Milk and Dairies Order of 1926 and these were registered in 1939.

(b). MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.—An inspection and report on all the private slaughter houses in the town has been considered by the Council. As a result a scheme for the provision of a public slaughter house has been prepared but the estimate of receipts and expenditure shews that the scheme in its present form would not be self supporting, the progress made however is gratifying and the active interest which is being taken in the matter by the Mayor as Chairman of the Markets Committee will no doubt result in a scheme which will have the support of the butchers as well as the general public. The Council have included a figure under this head in their Five Year Programme and it is very desirable in the public interests that the provision of a central slaughter house should be proceeded with with as little delay as possible.

Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

	Cattle, ex- cluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed (if known)	400	Nil.	98	2756	1400
Number Inspected	20	Nil.	5	69	35

All diseases except Tuberculosis.

Whole carcases condemned	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuber- culosis	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.

Tuberculosis only.

Whole carcases condemned	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.

(c). ADULTERATION.—All work under the Foods and Drugs Act 1928, Artificial Cream Act 1929, Public Health (Condensed Milk) Regulations 1923 & 1927, Public Health (Dried Milk) Regulations 1923 & 1927 and the Public Health (Preservatives in Food) Regulations, 1925 to 1927, is carried out under the direction of the County Medical Officer of Health.

(d).—CHEMICAL & BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF FOOD.—The work under this head also is carried out under the direction of the County Medical Officer of Health.

(e). NUTRITION.—No steps have been taken under this heading.

(f). SHELLFISH.—No action is necessary as there are no shellfish beds in the district.

SECTION F.—PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

1938 was remarkably free from infectious disease as the following table shows:—

Smallpox, Nil.

Scarlet Fever, One.

Diphtheria, Nil.

Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid), Nil.

Puerperal Pyrexia, One.

Pneumonia, Six. Four deaths.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Age Periods.	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0— ...								
1— ...								1
5— ...			1	1				
15— ...								
25— ...		1	3					
35— ...		1		1				
45— ...								
55— ...								
65 and upwards								
Totals	2	4	2					1

The only fatal case, which had been notified, was in a child of 1½ years from tuberculous meningitis.

Notification of Tuberculosis in the area is quite satisfactory.

Thanking you for your kind consideration and acknowledging with grateful thanks the assistance I have at all times received from your Borough Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

J. A CRUMP